

## Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 126846

FOLLOWING RPT CINCPACREP GUAM STATUS LNO 190 ACTION SECSTATE  
INFO CINCPAC CCGDFOURTEEN SECDEF 31 MAY 77

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L //N00000//

FROM STATUS LNO 190

MCN 002

E.O. 1152: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TQ

MARSHALL ISLANDS LEGISLATURE SESSION

A. STATUS LNO 0185

PASS INTERIOR FOR OMSN/DOTA

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. (C) MARSHALL ISLANDS LEGISLATURE (NITIJELA) COMPLETED EVENTFUL SESSION MID-MAY. SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION INCLUDED BILL FOR JULY 30 REFERENDUM ON SEPARATE STATUS AND BILL CLAIMING 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE JURISDICTION (REFTEL). MINORITY ANTI-SEPARATION FACTION WAS

2. (C) SESSION OPENED WITH VOTE BY NITIJELA, DOMINATED BY KABUA PRO-SEPARATION FACTION, TO REFUSE TO SEAT MEMBER-ELECT IROIJ ANJUA LOEAK, THOUGH HE WON SEAT IN NORTHWEST MARSHALLS BY MORE THAN TWO TO ONE MAJORITY. LOEAK IS CONSIDERED SYMPATHETIC TO MINORITY VOICE OF MARSHALLS, AND ALTHOUGH SON OF THE LATE IROIJ ALBERT LOEAK HIS

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POSITION AS HEAD OF LOEAK CLAN AND AS MEMBER OF NITIJELA WAS CHALLENGED BY HIS UNCLE MELON LOEAK, A KABUA SUPPORTER. NEW ELECTION FOR SEAT WAS ORDERED.

3. (C) WITH LOEAK'S SEAT VACANT, VOICE OF MARSHALLS COULD COUNT ON ONLY FOUR (ALL FROM SOUTHWEST ISLANDS) OF 23 NITIJELA MEMBERS. QUORUM, HOWEVER, IS 18, AND WITH A COUPLE OF KABUA SUPPORTERS AWAY AT MAINLAND UNIVERSITIES AND ANOTHER (IROIJ LEJOLAN KABUA) ELDERLY

AND ILL, MINORITY PARTICIPATION WAS NEEDED FOR QUORUM. VOICE OF MARSHALLS, LED BY JAMES MILNE AND COM MEMBER JOHN HEINE, USED THIS LEVERAGE TO BARGAIN OVER BILL FOR REFERENDUM WHICH ASKS VOTERS TO STATE WHETHER MARSHALLS SHOULD DETERMINE OWN POLITICAL STATUS SEPARATE FROM REST OF TT. VOM SUCCEEDED IN GETTING REFERENDUM POSTPONED FROM LATE MAY TO JULY 30, AND THOUGHT IT HAD ALSO SECURED A DEAL WHEREBY \$6,000 WOULD BE ALLOCATED FOR TRAVEL BY ANTI-SEPARATIST LEADERS TO CAMPAIGN ON REFERENDUM ISSUE IN OUTER ISLANDS. MARSHALL ISLANDS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION, MEANWHILE, WAS GETTING \$150,000 ON WHICH IT CAN DRAW TO CAMPAIGN FOR A PRO-SEPARATION VOTE.

4. (C) FOLLOWING PASSAGE OF REFERENDUM BILL AND \$150,000 MIPSC APPROPRIATION, HOWEVER, MAJORITY PROCEEDED TO SHELVE THE \$6,000 APPROPRIATION. VOM REPRESENTATIVES THEN WALKED OUT. AFTER SOME CONFUSION, SPEAKER ATLAN ANIEN, A KABUA LOYALIST, ISSUED A WARRANT FOR THE ARREST OF ABSENT VOM MEMBERS. WARRANT WAS EXECUTED AT 0200 BY LOCAL POLICE. VOM ACKNOWLEDGES THAT NITIJELA RULES AUTHORIZE SPEAKER TO ISSUE SUCH A WARRANT TO SERGEANT-AT-ARMS, BUT CLAIMS THAT EXECUTION BY POLICE WAS ILLEGAL. NEVERTHELESS, THE FORCED PRESENCE OF THREE VOM MEMBERS PERMITTED COMPLETION OF LEGISLATIVE BUSINESS, AND A SUBSEQUENT WALKOUT DID NOT INTERFERE WITH END OF SESSION. A VOM MEMBER HAS SINCE RESIGNED FROM NITIJELA, REDUCING VOM STRENGTH TO 3 OF 22 - STILL BETTER THAN THE TWO SEATS THEY HELD IN LAST NITIJELA.

5. (C) MILNE CONTENTS SEPARATISTS MAY LOSE IN REFERENDUM VOTE, ARGUING THAT SOUTHWEST ISLANDS WILL VOTE SOLIDLY AGAINST SEPARATION. MORE REALISTICALLY, JOHN HEINE CONCEDES THAT VOTE WILL PROBABLY GO FOR SEPARATION, THOUGH HE CLAIMS THIS COULD BE REVERSED IF VOM HAD FUNDS TO MEET AND REFUTE SEPARATIST CAMPAIGNING IN OUTER ISLANDS. HEINE ADDS, INCIDENTALLY, THAT HE WOULD LOSE HIS COM SEAT TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CHARLES DOMNICK (WHO HAS BEEN MAKING UP FOR HIS FAILURE TO CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVELY BEFORE LAST NOVEMBER'S ELECTION) IF NEW ELECTION FOR IT WERE HELD NOW.

6. (C) SEPARATIST CAUSE IN REFERENDUM WILL BE FURTHER ADVANCED BY THE LIKELIHOOD THAT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION RESOURCES WILL BE USED TO SUPPORT IT. KEY FIGURE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF REFERENDUM, AS WELL AS ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT RADIO STATION, IS DISTRICT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS CARMEN BIGLER, A PRO-KABUA SEPARATIST. OUTRIGHT FRAUD IN CONDUCT OF REFERENDUM OR COUNTING OF VOTES IS LESS LIKELY, THOUGH JOHN HEINE REMARKED HE WOULD NOT RULE IT OUT.

7. (C) NITIJELA ALSO PASSED BILL CLAIMING AS MARSHALLS PUBLIC PROPERTY ALL MARINE RESOURCES WITHIN A 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE (REFTEL). BENNEETT.  
UNQUOTE HABIB.

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## Message Attributes

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